



# Purchasing an Encyclopedia

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## Purchasing an Encyclopedia

12 Points  
to  
Consider

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# **Introduction**

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## **The Changing World of Encyclopedias**

Encyclopedias have been sold in American homes for more than 150 years. Having a salesperson visit your home is still the only way that some sets can be purchased. However, changes in American society are starting to affect the way encyclopedias are distributed. Because it is hard to find anyone home during the day anymore and since people guard their time more jealously in the evening, some encyclopedias are now sold in retail stores. *Academic American Encyclopedia* and *Compton's Encyclopedia* can be found in bookstore chains like Barnes & Noble and Encore and in some warehouse clubs, sometimes under different titles. *Compton's* is also for sale in the 1992 Sears, Roebuck Christmas catalog. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* has booths in malls and at state fairs where its products are sold. *Funk & Wagnalls* has long been sold in supermarkets, but a smaller version of *Academic American Encyclopedia* is now available on the book-a-week plan, too.

If you are interested in buying a print set, and you haven't seen encyclopedias in local retail outlets, how can you contact the publisher? If you live in a large city, look in the yellow pages under *Encyclopedias* for the name of a local sales office. Otherwise, call these customer service numbers:

*Encyclopaedia Britannica: Children's Britannica, New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1-800-323-1229; Compton's Encyclopedia, 1-800-858-4895.*

*Grolier: Academic American Encyclopedia, Encyclopedia Americana, New Book of Knowledge, 1-800-243-7256.*

Macmillan/P. F. Collier: *Collier's Encyclopedia*, 1-800-257-9500.

World Book: *World Book Encyclopedia*, 1-800-621-8202.

Remember that when you place an order for an encyclopedia in your home, the Federal Trade Commission guarantees a three-day "cooling-off period" during which you can cancel the purchase.

Buying a used encyclopedia is another option for families. Unfortunately, the encyclopedias usually found at garage sales are too old to be of much use. Libraries tend to replace their encyclopedias at least every five years. If you are considering a used set, avoid one that is older than five years, especially if it is to be used by children.

## One-Volume Encyclopedias

In the last few years, a number of one-volume encyclopedias have been published that can be purchased in book stores at prices ranging from \$40 to over \$100. Titles include the *American Spectrum Encyclopedia*, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia*, *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*, *The Random House Encyclopedia* (3rd ed.) and *Webster's New World Encyclopedia*. While these books make useful desk references, they cannot compete with multi-volume encyclopedias in terms of depth of coverage.

## Electronic Encyclopedias

As computers become more common in homes and libraries, encyclopedia publishers are making their sets available in electronic form, both on CD-ROM (a kind of compact disc) and online through such vendors as Compu-Serve, Prodigy, and America Online. (*Academic American Encyclopedia* and *Compton's Encyclopedia* are both avail-

able online.) This means the sets can be searched in some innovative ways to locate information that cannot be found with a printed index. Some of the CD-ROM versions have been enriched with audio and video as well, so instead of just reading about Mozart, you can hear his music or, in addition to reading about how the elbow works, you can see it move in a video clip. Initially, these encyclopedias were only available in versions to be used with IBM-compatible computers, but two are now available for the Macintosh as well.

*Academic American Encyclopedia* was the first to be available on CD-ROM; the current version, the *New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*, is available in both IBM-compatible and Macintosh versions for \$395. It can be ordered through the mail from several software catalogs or purchased in retail stores like Computerland; a copy is included with the purchase of many CD-ROM drives. *Information Finder*, the CD-ROM version of *The World Book Encyclopedia*, can be ordered directly from World Book for \$549. *Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia* was the first to add other media. It costs \$595 for the DOS version, \$695 for the Windows version, and \$795 for the Macintosh version; it can be purchased in computer stores. *Compton's Family Encyclopedia* is a slightly stripped-down version with fewer illustrations and no animation that costs \$295 in the DOS version and \$395 in the Windows version. In the fall of 1992, Microsoft is releasing *Encarta*, a new multimedia encyclopedia that is partially based on *Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*. It will be sold in software stores for \$395. Also new this year is a CD-ROM index to *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Encyclopedias have also entered the field of consumer electronics, with versions available for CD-I (compact disc-interactive) and CDTV, electronic systems that are used with a television set instead of a computer. A stripped-down

version of an encyclopedia is even available for Sony's Data Discman, a portable disc player.

## Why Purchase an Encyclopedia?

Encyclopedias are probably most frequently used to answer specific questions (what librarians call ready-reference questions). What is the population of New Orleans? When was Abraham Lincoln born? When did Boston last win the World Series? How much does a whale weigh? Some sets include how-to-do-it information, with instructions on creating an indoor garden or preparing an animal skeleton for a science project, for example. In addition to answering factual questions, encyclopedias provide an introduction to and overview of topics that usually are accompanied by reading lists leading to further information, so they are ideal places to start research for a term paper. Some sets are designed specifically to meet curriculum-related needs of students. Encyclopedias are excellent sources of illustrations. While all sets use photographs and drawings to clarify the text, some encyclopedias particularly stress the visual. An encyclopedia is also a wonderful tool for the independent learner. A good encyclopedia inevitably encourages browsing. Columnist Bob Greene reminisced in the March 5, 1986, *Chicago Tribune* about his use of an encyclopedia as a child: "On days when there was not much to do, I would sometimes pick out a volume at random, and just go through it until I found a subject that appealed to me. Then I would read up on that subject until the end of the encyclopedia's entry—and then I would go on to another subject. And it wasn't boring. . . . It was as if the world was contained in those 26 volumes, and any time I felt like it I could jump headlong into that world and come out with something I never knew about before."

## How to Select an Encyclopedia

The most critical factor in selecting an encyclopedia is choosing a set appropriate for the age of the potential users. Often families want to buy a set for an elementary school child that will take him or her through college, and so they choose one of the sets for older students, hoping the child will "grow into it." Instead, the child may become discouraged by trying to use a set that is written at too advanced a level, and by the time he or she is able to use the encyclopedia, some of its contents will be outdated. When buying an encyclopedia for an elementary school child, it is best to select one written for younger readers. Your child will be more likely to use it and develop the habit of using reference books. Since young children are not able to go to the public library on their own, parents will especially appreciate having a set at home.

Families with older children will also find an encyclopedia a worthwhile purchase. While high school students may be able to go to the library independently, they will be grateful for a set at home when they procrastinate on starting an assignment until the library is closed. Finally, though it is often the presence of children in the home that motivates adults to purchase an encyclopedia, it is a useful resource for adults as well. In addition to helping parents answer children's questions, a good encyclopedia will provide background information for other books adults are reading or television programs they are watching, will help resolve informal debates, and will even help with puzzles and games. Adults who work at home will also find an encyclopedia useful.

The multivolume general encyclopedias on the market today can be identified as being written for the following age groups: (1) for 7- through 14-year-old readers—*The New Book of Knowledge*; (2) for children from about 11 through the teenage years—*Compton's Encyclopedia, New Stand-*

ard Encyclopedia, and *The World Book Encyclopedia* (the latter two with some articles or parts of articles written at the adult level); (3) relatively smaller sets appropriate both for teenagers and adults—*Academic American Encyclopedia* and *Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*; and (4) large, comprehensive sets for high school and college students and adults—*Collier's Encyclopedia*, *Encyclopedia Americana*, and *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*. All the sets for young people have material that is useful for adults as well. In some cases, articles in a children's set may be a better introduction to a very complicated topic for adults than those in the comprehensive encyclopedias. For instance, an adult with no science background may find the explanations of black holes or supernovas in a children's set easier to understand.

## 12 Points to Consider before Purchase

After narrowing down the field based on the appropriateness of the sets for the intended age group, there are 12 criteria that can be used in evaluating an encyclopedia. Each characteristic is briefly explained below. Visit your local public or school library and compare encyclopedias, looking up topics you have some knowledge of to assess the relative strengths of sets.

**Authority.** Encyclopedias differ in the extent to which they use outside experts to draft articles. Most articles in *New Standard Encyclopedia* are written by staff and reviewed by outside experts. Many sets have longer articles written by outside authors and short articles written by editorial staff, while *World Book* has authors' signatures at the ends of even the briefest articles. Potential purchasers of an encyclopedia can find the credentials of its contributors listed in either the first or the last volume of the set. An examination of the lists of contributors to all these

sets shows that some of them are dead or long retired. While many distinguished experts contribute articles to encyclopedias, the editors determine what information to include as well as the format in which it will appear. Editors also do much of the updating of articles on a year-to-year basis.

**Arrangement.** All the encyclopedias reviewed here are arranged alphabetically, either word by word or letter by letter. (For example, a word-by-word arrangement is *ice cream, ice hockey, iceboating, Iceland*. A letter-by-letter arrangement is *iceboating, ice cream, ice hockey, Iceland*.) A word-by-word arrangement is easier for most children to use. Also, it is helpful for younger readers if the alphabet is divided so that all of one letter (or a combination of letters like *WXYZ*) is in one volume.

To assist in finding related information, encyclopedias have indexes, cross-references, and tables of contents or boxed summaries at the beginnings of long articles. A detailed index is particularly helpful in drawing together information that may be scattered throughout the set. Artists, for example, may have articles of their own but may also be discussed in broader articles on painting or sculpture. To test an encyclopedia's indexing and cross-referencing system, pick four or five topics and see how the various keys lead to related information. To compare ease of use, the same topics should be looked up in similar encyclopedias.

**Subject Coverage.** To determine if subject coverage is appropriate for your needs, consider the type and range of topics included in the encyclopedia and the relative space allotted to various subjects. Are "hot" topics and contemporary issues covered or only those items that have been proven by the passage of time to be a permanent part of our cultural heritage? Does the allocation of space to various subjects meet your requirements? Are you interested in such practical topics as careers or nutrition or how-to-do-it

information, or more scholarly subjects? Encyclopedias for children will, of course, devote more attention to such topics as pets, hobbies, and sports.

**Accuracy.** Readers often take for granted that information in an encyclopedia is accurate, but outdated statistics and erroneous dates can be found. Generally editors take special care to make articles as accurate as possible, and all copy goes through a lengthy checking procedure. Before investing in an encyclopedia, inspect topics with which you are familiar to see if articles on them are accurate. If information is not correct, it may be because the article needs updating (see *Recency* below).

**Objectivity.** Space limitations in encyclopedias make a lengthy presentation of all points of view on controversial topics impossible. We must depend on the editorial judgment of encyclopedia editors to present a balanced picture. Examine articles on topics like abortion or the Middle East to see to what extent opposing viewpoints are given balanced consideration. Also be on the alert for the presence of racial and sexual biases. Attempts to counter racism in encyclopedias have included adding biographies of people of different races and other multicultural material. Similar steps have been taken to eliminate sexual bias, but be on the lookout for the stereotyping of women, overuse of the pronoun *he*, and single-gender characterizations of vocations (for example, exclusively male airline pilots or female secretaries). Encyclopedias that have revised their texts on these topics may still be using older photographs that reflect stereotypes. Encyclopedias are written to sell to the widest possible audience, and therefore most articles represent mainstream thinking. If you are looking for articles that propound unorthodox views on health, for instance, you will not find them in these sets.

**Recency.** There are facts that do not “date.” Much of the information on the humanities—art, music, philosophy—does not change dramatically over time. However, popula-

tion statistics, election results, important scientific breakthroughs, and sports records are among the many topics on which out-of-date information is misleading. The fact that the encyclopedias reviewed here all undergo an annual revision does not mean that *all* facts are updated. Encyclopedia editors have budgets that limit the number of pages they are able to change in any one revision, with most sets making changes on about 10 percent of their pages per year. Before investing in an encyclopedia, check the currency of information on topics with which you are familiar.

**Quality.** All of the points discussed here influence quality. An additional factor, however, is the length of articles, which should vary with the importance and complexity of a subject. Encyclopedias differ in the degree to which they present information on specific topics or subsume material on related topics into broad articles. *Encyclopedia Americana*, for instance, tends to have articles on specific subjects. *Collier's*, on the other hand, has fewer, longer articles on broader topics. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* uses both approaches, with long articles on broad topics in the *Macropaedia* and shorter articles on narrower topics in the *Micropaedia*. None of these procedures is necessarily better than the others; each appeals to some individuals.

**Style.** Even though the subject matter of an encyclopedia is largely factual, it should be a pleasure to read. The language should be appropriate to the subject and to the intended audience. Some publishers of encyclopedias for children use controlled vocabularies or test the reading level of articles using various readability formulas in order to guarantee that children will be able to understand them. In sets for all age levels, technical and advanced terms should be defined when they first appear. Difficult topics should be introduced gradually and with sufficient explanation, so that they do not overwhelm the reader. Read an article on a technical topic and see if it is accessible to you.

**Bibliographies.** Most encyclopedias include lists of suggested readings as guides to further study. Books that are grouped on the basis of difficulty are particularly useful in sets used by children. The works listed should be current and generally available. Bibliographies are most useful when they appear at the ends of articles instead of being segregated in a separate volume. Teachers sometimes discourage students from using encyclopedias because they suspect that they rely too much on them when writing term papers, but the encyclopedia article can provide an excellent introduction to a term-paper topic, and its bibliography will provide titles of materials for further research.

**Illustrations.** Drawings, maps, photographs, diagrams, and other graphics make encyclopedias appealing to readers but they are an instructional component as well. Pictures should be clear, informative, and attractive and placed adjacent to the articles they illustrate, with captions complete enough to avoid confusion. The use of color enhances the appearance of an encyclopedia, and encyclopedia publishers are increasingly using more color. Some sets are printed entirely on four-color presses, so that color can appear on any page. Other publishers still print only selected sections on a four-color press, which means the decision of where to use color is partially determined by where the article appears in the set rather than its subject. Since children are more dependent on pictures for meaning than adults, pay special attention to illustrations when selecting a set for them.

**Physical Format.** Some encyclopedias have more than one binding available at different prices. For home use, the most inexpensive binding should be suitable. Test a volume to see whether it lies flat when opened. The centers of double-page maps and illustrations should not disappear into the binding. The paper should be opaque so that the print on one side of a page does not bleed through on the reverse. Type should be clear and legible, and page layouts

inviting. Encyclopedias for young children are sometimes set in a large typeface that is easier to read.

**Yearbooks and Other Special Products.** Some encyclopedias have extra features sold as part of a package, such as reference services or separate atlases and dictionaries, that are intended to lure hesitant buyers. Don't let the presence of these features distract you from assessing the encyclopedia's quality.

All encyclopedia publishers issue a yearbook (except for *New Standard*, which publishes a quarterly supplement). *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* contains cross-references to its yearbook, but most yearbooks, while being useful sources of current information, are not related to the parent set in arrangement. In fact, some publishers use the same yearbook to update several different sets, and others contract out the preparation of their yearbooks to other encyclopedia publishers. When purchasing an encyclopedia, you will be asked to subscribe to the yearbook. Do not feel compelled to make a decision on the spot; you can subscribe later.

## Conclusion and Bibliography

We hope the following reviews make clear that most of these sets have distinctive qualities and that, while their coverage overlaps a great deal, unique information can be found in each. Americans are fortunate to have so many encyclopedias with complementary coverage to serve as a mainstay of the home and library reference collection.

Readers wanting information on other encyclopedias should consult one of the following books, which may be available in libraries:

*Kister's Concise Guide to Best Encyclopedias* by Kenneth F. Kister. Oryx Press, 1988. \$15 (0-89774-404-2).

Based on the title listed below, this book offers reviews of 33 encyclopedias for children and adults. It also has brief notes on 187 specialized subject encyclopedias.

*Best Encyclopedias: A Guide to General and Specialized Encyclopedias* by Kenneth F. Kister. Oryx Press, 1986. \$39.50 (0-89774-171-4).

In addition to reviewing all of the encyclopedias discussed here, Kister also reviews 42 other sets, some of them out of print and others in one volume. Appendixes give brief comments on specialized subject encyclopedias and foreign-language encyclopedias.

*General Reference Books for Adults* (Bowker Buying Guides Series). Bowker, 1988. \$69.95 (0-8352-2393-0).

Reviews nearly 300 encyclopedias, dictionaries, and atlases for adults.

*Reference Books for Young Readers* (Bowker Buying Guide Series). Bowker, 1988. \$49.95 (0-8352-2366-3).

Evaluates encyclopedias, dictionaries, and atlases for children.

## Encyclopedia Reviews

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Nineteen ninety-one was another difficult year for encyclopedia editors, as dramatic events in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe continued through the end of the year. One problem was getting updated maps of these areas to accompany articles, since maps and text should be consistent. Because an encyclopedia is not intended to serve as a current-awareness source like a newspaper, coverage of the events of late 1991 is not stressed in these reviews, especially since the publication dates of encyclopedias vary from January 1 to the end of March.

On the issue of consistency between maps and text, one place where many of these sets fail is in the consistent use of Chinese transliteration systems. The pinyin system has been in use in this country since 1979, but only *World Book* consistently uses it (*Compton's* does with a few exceptions). Many sets use pinyin on maps but Wade-Giles in text (e.g., *Tianjin* on the map of China but *Tientsin* as the entry for the city), and a few sets use Wade-Giles throughout.

Two encyclopedias for children underwent major structural changes this year. Both *Compton's Encyclopedia* and *The New Book of Knowledge* are eliminating the indexes, which also included brief articles, at the end of each volume. *Compton's* removed all its "Fact-Indexes" at the ends of volumes in the 1992 set, but the separate index volume still contains many brief articles. *The New Book of Knowledge* will be eliminating its "Dictionary Indexes" over several years. The information in the brief articles will be integrated into the body of the set.

This year these sets incorporate the 1990 U.S. census population figures (except for *New Standard*, which has updated state articles but not all city ones). The statistics the publishers provided us on these changes are a good measure of the relative coverage of American places in encyclopedias. For instance, *The New Book of Knowledge* had to change about 35 city articles; *World Book*, 330 cities; *Funk & Wagnalls*, 1,353; *Collier's* 1,530; *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1,800; and *Encyclopedia Americana*, 2,005. Since the census is only taken every 10 years, the inclusion of these new statistics makes this a good time to purchase an encyclopedia.

Reviews of nine encyclopedias are reprinted here from the September 15, 1992 issue of *Booklist/Reference Books Bulletin*. Two sets that were reviewed in previous years are not included. *Merit Student's Encyclopedia* has ceased publication, and *Children's Britannica*, while still available, was not issued in a revised edition for 1992.

**Academic American Encyclopedia.** 21 v. Lawrence T. Lorimer, editorial director; K. Anne Ranson, editor in chief. Grolier, 1992.

First published in 1980, *Academic American Encyclopedia* is the most recently created general English-language encyclopedia. *AAE* emphasizes the subjects common to the curriculum of American schools and universities. The encyclopedia's strengths include contemporary events, pop culture, international affairs, and current technology, though more than a third of the work covers the humanities and the arts. *AAE*'s preface indicates that more than 90 percent of the encyclopedia has been written by outside authorities affiliated with major academic institutions, corporations, and nonprofit organizations. Forty-four new contributors were added to the 1992 edition, including Jefferson W. Tester, professor of chemical engineering at

MIT (*Geothermal Energy*), and Louise Bates Ames, associate director of the Gesell Institute of Human Development (*Child Development*). However, many of the most timely new articles such as *Gulf War*, *Cyberspace*, and *Bank of Credit and Commerce International* are unsigned, as are over 25 percent of the articles in the set.

*AAE* covers a broad spectrum of information through 28,940 concise, factual articles. More than half of them are less than 500 words in length. This format plus excellent tables, graphs, and illustrations makes it ideal for ready-reference questions. The set also includes general overview articles such as the new one *Petroleum* that could serve as a beginning point in student research, identifying key concepts and controversial issues. The editors of *AAE* identify their audience as upper elementary students through adults. However, a tendency to technical detail, scholarly vocabulary, and lengthy sentences makes some of these articles challenging to even middle school readers. Nearly 40 percent of all articles conclude with a bibliography of one to twelve entries. These include standard and recently published English-language works that should be readily available in most library systems. The bibliographic references are uniformly for college and adult audiences. More than 2,000 bibliographies were revised this year, as part of a five-year program to revise all reading lists.

As in the past, approximately one-third of the space is devoted to the handsome illustrations for which *AAE* is known—photographs, artwork, and maps, three-quarters of which are in full color. Of the 16,900 illustrations, 167 are new this year. The replaced articles *Landscape Architecture* and *Landscape Painting*, for example, have been entirely reillustrated with attractive pictures. *Life-Support Systems* has two new photographs of space suits used in the space program. There are also 93 revised maps documenting the reunification of Germany, the union of two Yemeni

states, and other recent changes in world affairs. Page layouts are striking.

*AAE*'s substantial index of over 200,000 entries includes all articles, illustrations, and major map designations, as well as numerous *see* and *see also* references. However, valuable information in fact boxes and tables is frequently ignored in the index. For example, no entry is found for Elias James Corey, the 1990 Nobel Prize winner in chemistry, although he is noted in the list of winners in the article *Nobel Prize*. The 1992 index has been reorganized. Index entries are now arranged in letter-by-letter order, providing an alternative method of searching for subjects as compared with the word-by-word order of the articles themselves. This may improve accessibility to the set's contents by providing another means of approach, but it may also confuse some readers. The index now sets all headings in boldface type while preserving the distinction between article titles and other headings by setting the article titles in capital letters. Within the body of the set, there are also extensive cross-references, both internal and *see also* references, that will help the many encyclopedia users who tend to avoid the index volume.

World events appeared to have triggered most changes in the 1992 *AAE*. Eighty new articles, including such entries as *F-117A Stealth Fighter*, *High Definition Television*, *Fragile-X Syndrome*, *Language*, and *Thomas, Clarence*, were added to this edition. There are also brief new entries for Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi and Edith Cresson, the former prime minister of France. *AAE* is the only set that has a separate entry for Suu Kyi; *Britannica* and *AAE* are the only sets with an entry for Cresson. The new entry *Genetic Testing* addresses the ethical aspects of this topic as well as the scientific ones. In addition to these new articles, 50 existing ones were replaced with lengthier, signed entries. These include such subjects as *Breast Feeding*, *Germany*, *Vegetarianism*, and *Fellini, Federico*. Nearly

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5,000 existing articles and over 90 maps received major or minor revision. The Gulf War, the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, and 1990 census data directly impacted the substantial revisions required in 1992. Approximately 17 percent of this edition's articles were revised in some manner, providing an extremely current text.

A slightly modified version of the previous year's edition of *AAE* is sold in retail stores to consumers as *The Grolier International Encyclopedia* and *Barnes & Noble New American Encyclopedia*. A condensed version is sold in supermarkets as *The Grolier Encyclopedia of Knowledge*. *AAE* is available in several electronic versions. It is online with such services as CompuServe and Prodigy. The CD-ROM version, *The New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*, contains thousands of color pictures, over 250 color maps, plus audio and motion sequences. Additional features include a time line with links to articles and a "knowledge tree" that allows the user to explore additional topics. The set is also available for CD-TV.

Designed to provide quick access to factual information, *Academic American Encyclopedia* is an attractive and easy-to-use reference tool of great value to libraries serving middle school, high school, and adult readers. Its brief entries do not provide the historical depth found in larger sets, but its specific-entry approach makes access easy. Its currency is unsurpassed.

**Collier's Encyclopedia.** 24v. Lauren S. Bahr, editorial director; Bernard Johnston, editor in chief. Macmillan, 1992.

First published in 1950, *Collier's* is intended to be "a scholarly, systematic, continuously revised summary of the knowledge that is significant to mankind."

Entries range from one paragraph to many pages (e.g., *Architecture* at 74 pages, *United States* at about 100). Although *Collier's* is known for its broad topical approach,

there are many short entries; these tend to identify geographic entities, people, specific flora and fauna, and associations. Headings and subheadings are generously used; some longer articles have tables of contents to guide the reader. Most articles are signed. Volume 1 lists 5,000 editors, advisors, and contributors, with identification at time of service. Degrees, titles, and major publications are listed. There are 61 new contributors this year.

*Collier's* presentation of information is clear and straightforward; articles are aimed at lay readers. Terminology used avoids jargon and pedantry. Some articles are more demanding than others, but this appears to be a function of the technical nature of the material, rather than inappropriate presentation. Periodic instances of non-gender-free language are found; for example, in *Newspaper*, a VDT is described as a "keyboard attached to a television tube on which a reporter can read his story as he writes."

In some entries, glossaries (e.g., *Musical Terms*) or capsule biographies of personalities (e.g., *Musical Theater in America*) are provided. Pronunciation is given for most terms, and the key is printed at the front of each volume. Dates for population are noted; U.S. figures are from the 1990 census. However, population figures for cities in other countries aren't always as current. For instance, the 1971 population is given for Amalfi, Italy.

A 200-page bibliography in the last volume is arranged by broad topics, broken down by form and subject; entries are briefly annotated. *Collier's* policy here is to emphasize current books, readily available, written in English. Sections of the bibliography revised this year include general reference books, chemistry, mathematics, architecture, and sports and games. Some sections need updating. Most of the titles in the education section, for instance, date from the 1960s and 1970s. In recent years, bibliographies have been appended to new and revised articles, but these are still infrequent. This year, none of the new entries has a bibliog-

raphy. Bibliographies were added to six rewritten or revised articles.

The publisher notes over 14,000 illustrations, 28 percent of which are in color, up from 10 percent in 1988. *Collier's* is moving toward a greater use of color; over 500 attractive color photographs were added this year throughout the set. For example, *Argentina* has 8 new photographs, *Cactus* has 9, and *Eskimo*, 10.

The index in the final volume has 450,000 entries; most entries are identified briefly, for example, "*Detroit Red Wings* (hockey team)." The index identifies bibliography entries, illustrations, and maps. Page numbers include page quadrant (*a*, *b*, *c*, or *d*). The "Study Guide", also in the last volume, mainly lists under broad topic some of the articles to be found in *Collier's*. For example, under "Modern Philosophers" is a list of 27 people about whom articles are found in the set.

The publisher indicates that this year there are 39 new articles (e.g., *Baker, James*; *Persian Gulf War*; *Marfan's Syndrome*; *Nursing Home*; *King, Stephen*; *Teleology*; *Yeltsin, Boris*; and *Restoration and Conservation*). The lengthiest, *Persian Gulf War*, is 9½ pages and has 9 color photographs and a map. Among the 64 completely rewritten articles are *Columbus, Christopher*; *Germany* (combining both Germanys); *Marsupial*; *Metallurgical Analysis*; *Nervous System*; *Botticelli*; and *Haiti*. Many sections of the USSR entry were rewritten to reflect changes there. The publisher claims over 2,600 "updated or otherwise revised articles." For instance, over 150 entries on German places were revised to reflect the reunification of Germany.

Some articles, however, are in need of revision. For example, *Abortion* was written when the U.S. was moving toward broadened abortion rights, not the opposite. *Audio-Visual Instructional Materials* dates back to the late 1960s and hence doesn't mention video and other new technologies. *Library Research and Reporting* (Louis Shores

and Richard Darling, authors) cites superseded editions and gives minimal attention to electronic sources of information. A comparison of volume 17 of the 1992 edition with the same volume in the 1981 set shows new and rewritten articles and new illustrations, but some dated material. For instance, *Newspaper* badly needs revision. It provides extensive historical information, but the section on the contemporary newspaper is out of date. An accompanying photograph, captioned "Modern Newspaper Equipment," shows a manual typewriter and a linotype machine. The entry *Music, History of* also gives good historical treatment but skimps on coverage of modern composers. The accompanying photograph of a synthesizer shows what must have been a very early prototype. *Narcotics, Control of*, contains no mention of cocaine and recent antidrug initiatives.

*Collier's Encyclopedia* is a large set with extensive historical coverage of many topics, but it is not the first place to turn for information on current subjects. The amount of revision this year is considerably higher than in recent years, and the addition of many new color photographs is improving the set's look; the publisher is encouraged to continue these trends. High school, academic, and public libraries could all benefit from owning *Collier's*.

**Compton's Encyclopedia & Fact-Index.** 26 v. Ed. by Dale Good. Compton's Learning Co., 1992.

*Compton's*, published since 1922, continues to meet the information needs of students at the upper elementary through high school level. *Compton's* completed a radical six-year revision of the text in 1989. Now, for 1992, the set has been completely reset and redesigned and extensively reillustrated.

Articles are arranged alphabetically letter by letter; most of them are not signed. However, for this printing, names of more than 500 contributors were added to articles, bringing the number of signed entries to 1,042. Many of the con-

tributors are affiliated with academic or government institutions; others are writers, teachers, or librarians.

There are 23 new articles in the main text, including *Animal Rights*, *Persian Gulf War*, and *Yeltsin, Boris*. The new entries *Gangs* and *Scouting*, each about a page in length, address topics of interest to children. In addition, around 90 articles have been rewritten or extensively revised, and more than 900 have been updated. About 120 bibliographies were updated, and three new bibliographies were added. Among articles that have been revised are *Gorbachev, Mikhail* and *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*. The article on Gorbachev is current through October 1991, when he proposed the economic union of several republics. To the article on the former USSR, the editors have added a brief introductory paragraph noting recent changes and stating that the article deals with the Soviet Union that existed before the changes took place. The articles *Egypt*, *Iraq*, *Kuwait*, and *Saudi Arabia* have been updated to show their role in the Persian Gulf War, but not the articles *Israel*, *Jordan*, or *Syria*. Last year, the Board noted that the Old Slave Mart Museum shown in *South Carolina* had closed; the picture of the museum has been dropped from the rewritten and reillustrated article. The Board also commented on the fact that automation was nearly ignored in *Library*. Though the text in the 1992 printing has not changed, photographs have been added to show library patrons using computers and online catalogs. Revised articles that will be of special interest to children include *Amusement Park* and *Fast Food*.

One major change for 1992 is that the separate indexes at the end of each volume have been dropped. These indexes analyzed the contents of each volume and also contained brief entries for topics not covered in the main alphabetical sequence. They were cumulated in volume 26, *Master Fact-Index*, which has been renamed *Fact-Index*, and now serves as the sole index for the set. *Compton's* is 694 pages

shorter because of the elimination of these duplicate indexes. Almost 2,300 new short articles were added to the *Fact-Index*, including *Abscam*, *Electronic Mail*, *Virtual Reality*, *Voguing*, and *Thomas, Clarence*. Entries on a number of people of interest to children, such as Fresh Prince, Whitney Houston, and Fay Vincent, are new. The *Fact-Index* notes the 1991 deaths of Miles Davis, Rajiv Gandhi, and Dr. Seuss. In addition, about 600 entries in the *Fact-Index* had major revision. Also added were 65 new tables, including "Basketball Hall of Fame" and "Major Volcanoes of the World". The list of volcanoes does not show the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, but it is noted in the Philippines article.

Besides the index, other features that aid access to the set are cross-references, preview boxes that serve as tables of contents for longer articles, and fact-finder boxes that refer the reader to related topics.

By far the greatest amount of change has taken place in the look of the encyclopedia, beginning with its bright, royal-blue binding. The set is now printed on four-color presses, and the entire text has been reset. Running text appears in a new typeface, with ragged-right margins. Captions were reset in a boldface italic type. All tables and sidebars were redesigned. Over 1,000 two-color maps were changed to four-color, and nearly 300 maps were added or revised. There are more than 2,000 new four-color photographs and more than 1,300 new four-color drawings, graphs, and charts. According to the editors, *Compton's* is now about 65 percent four-color, compared to 35 percent in 1991. In addition, about 3,300 pages have been redesigned, including all of the state and Canadian province articles. New illustrations have been provided for many of the articles of interest to children, such as *Circus*, *Doll*, and *Zoo*, and for a number of the science articles, which are *Compton's* traditional area of strength. *Birds*, for example, now has more than 60 color photos, along with numerous four-color illustrations to replace the pictures in the previous

edition, which were primarily two-color drawings. Not all the articles have been reillustrated to the same extent. In some cases, such as *Egypt*, *Ancient* and *Byzantine Empire*, the reillustration consists of replacing the old two-color map with a new four-color one.

*Compton's* is available in several electronic versions. *Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia* combines the text of *Compton's* with illustrations, animation, and sound on a CD-ROM. *Compton's Family Encyclopedia*, another CD-ROM version, offers the same text and illustrations, but no animation and less sound. *Compton's Concise Encyclopedia* is available for Data Discman, Sony's hand-held, battery-powered CD-ROM player. A compact disc-interactive version of *Compton's* is under development.

While it led the way in adding graphics to the electronic version, *Compton's* had lagged behind its counterparts in the illustration and design of the print set. Now *Compton's* has taken a major step towards enhancing its visual appeal. There is no question that the set benefits from its new design. The increase in the number of four-color illustrations, the crisper typeface, and the new page layouts give the 1992 printing a much more lively and up-to-date appearance. In the past, the Board has made note of *Compton's* accuracy, concision, and generally adequate updating. This year we can also note its attractive appearance. *Compton's* is recommended for public and elementary and middle school libraries.

**Encyclopedia Americana.** 30 v. Lawrence T. Lorimer, editorial director; Mark Cummings, editor in chief. Grolier, 1992.

*Encyclopedia Americana*, originally issued between 1829 and 1833, was the first general encyclopedia published in the U.S. Its intended audience is high school and college students and adults. Although international in scope, the set

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S emphasizes subjects for U.S. and Canadian audiences, for example, the entries *New York State Barge Canal System* and *Antietam, Battle of* with detailed maps. The second largest of the sets reviewed here, *Americana* gives a balanced assessment of controversial subjects like homosexuality, sex education, and scientology.

*Americana* has over 6,500 advisers and contributors, 40 of them new to this edition. A random sampling determined that approximately 36 percent of all articles are signed. A contributors list at the beginning of volume 1 shows affiliations. Most contributors are university faculty; others are government and private industry experts or members of learned organizations. Among the new contributors this year are Barbara S. Okun, Office of Population Research, Princeton University (*United States: Population Growth and Characteristics*) and Elizabeth H. Pleck, Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College (*Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton*).

Pronunciation guides are given for entries within the text. Some specialized articles have a glossary of terms. Many articles contain short bibliographies, most of which cite titles published in the 1980s. There is a limited use of *see* and *see also* references within the text. This moderate usage of cross-references mandates the use of the 353,000-item index to locate appropriate information. Maps and illustrations are also indexed here.

This year, about six percent of the set's approximately 52,000 entries had some revision. There are 21 new entries, 79 replacement articles, 68 articles with major revisions, and 2,986 with minor revisions. Among the new articles this year are several excellent ones under *Banks and Banking*. The new articles *Homelessness*, *Persian Gulf War*, and the rewritten *Canada: Health and Welfare* treat timely topics that will be of interest to students. Biographies are now provided for John Major, Colin Powell, and Clarence Thomas. Replacement articles include *Cold War*, *Warsaw*

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*Pact*, *Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation*, and *Savings and Loan Associations*. Among the articles with major revision are *AIDS*, *Black Americans*, and *Yugoslavia: Yugoslavia after Tito*. Of the 2,986 minor revisions, 415 are updated bibliographies, and more than 2,000 are changes in U.S. population data.

Among the numerous examples of the editors' efforts to keep *Americana* current, the article *Assassination* notes the May 21, 1991, death of Rajiv Gandhi (as does his biography). *Disasters* lists the August 1991 Hurricane Bob and the October 1991 California brushfires. Articles on Czechoslovakia, boxer George Foreman, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, and Boris Yeltsin mention events right up to the publisher's deadline of September 1991.

In contrast, many articles demonstrate neglect. For example, *Air Transportation*, which we criticized in our 1989 review as outdated, still has not been revised. As was pointed out in our review last year, the article *Foundations* cites 1967 figures, and *Divorce* gives 1975 and 1976 statistics. *Career Planning* cites salaries from the 1960s. The articles *Automobiles*, *Beer*, and *Crime and Criminology* have old statistical data. The entry *Apprenticeship* states, "The present-day apprentice in American industry can expect \$2 an hour." The reunification of Germany is not reflected in all articles. *Potsdam*, for instance, is described as "a city in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany)." Articles on the Philippines, its provinces, and various cities cite census data for 1980, 1975, 1970, and 1960, even though a new census was conducted in 1990. The population for *Nantes* (France) is from 1968, and for *Antung* (China) from 1958. An inconsistent writing style is found in some articles. Susan B. Anthony, for instance, is referred to in her biography as "Miss Anthony" while men are referred to by their surnames.

There are approximately 22,865 photographs, maps, line drawings, and various other illustrations appropriately placed throughout the text. Added this year are 160 new illustrations, including a map of Columbus' voyages and new color photographs for several countries. About 14 percent of the set's illustrations are in color, the lowest proportion among all the sets reviewed here. The editors state that this year they have changed to using coated paper stock throughout the set, which will allow for more extensive use of color in future editions. We hope this change signifies an effort to make improvements in this area. For example, many country articles in *Americana* lack color photographs.

There are also omissions in coverage, such as no biographical articles on such prominent persons as Norman Schwarzkopf and Salman Rushdie. There is an entry for Oral Roberts, but none for Pat Robertson. Only passing references are made to significant black leaders like Ralph Abernathy, Floyd McKissick, and Louis Farrakhan.

This encyclopedia does an excellent job of providing historical coverage of many topics, but there is a problem with keeping articles current. For this extensive historical coverage of many subjects, *Encyclopedia Americana* remains a useful reference for high school and college students and adults.

**Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia.** 29 v. Leon L. Bram, editorial director; Norma H. Dickey, editor in chief. Funk & Wagnalls, 1992.

Founded in 1876, Funk & Wagnalls first published an encyclopedia in 1912. The present title and a program of continuous semiannual revision date from 1971. The set—designed primarily for junior and senior high school students and the general, nonspecialist adult public—is distributed in the U.S. and Canada through supermarket “book-a-week” programs. In the past, schools and libraries

have purchased it directly from the publisher, but a special 1993 school and library edition is being sold by Oxford University Press.

In the spring 1992 printing, volumes 1–27 and the first half of volume 28 contain some 25,000 articles. The latter half of volume 28 is a bibliography of 9,500 annotated entries divided into nearly 1,600 topical reading lists and more than 300 biography reading lists. Volume 29 is the index. Cross-references are provided within and at the ends of articles, but the index should be consulted to find all related entries. It has 130,000 entries and does not include references to illustrations or to the bibliography. *F&W* does not supply pronunciation for unfamiliar words.

Most entries in *F&W* are brief (less than a page); a few, however, are fairly long (e.g., *Europe*, 40 pages; *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*, 52 pages; *United States of America*, 108 pages). While over 900 contributors are identified and their initials are appended to their entries, most of the articles are unsigned and are the work of *F&W*'s editorial staff. More than 3,000 entries conclude with cross-references to the bibliographies in volume 28. Almost every one of these lists contains some books from the 1980s, including some recent titles (e.g., *Atlas of United States Environmental Issues*, 1990; *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Ornithology*, 1991). On the other hand, superseded editions of some works are listed (e.g., the 1983 edition of *The Negro Almanac* instead of the 1989). Works included tend to be popular, rather than scholarly, treatments.

According to the publisher, the fall 1991–spring 1992 revisions added 10 new articles (compared with 24 in 1990–91) and updated more than 2,600 others. Seven of the new entries are biographical (Rachel Field, Saddam Hussein, Helmut Kohl, John Major, Colin Powell, Clarence Thomas, Boris Yeltsin); the other three relate to a national park, a European conference, and the Persian Gulf War. Revised entries are many and varied. A major part of the

substantially revised coverage has been in chemistry (*Elements, Chemical; Periodic Law; Chemical Reaction*; and 103 articles on individual chemical elements). There are still the separate entries *Germany, East* and *Germany, West*, but each concludes with a paragraph describing reunification. Maps have been revised to reflect this fact, and 470 entries were updated to remove the East-West designation. Some 25 articles were updated for the Persian Gulf War and other Middle Eastern events (*Air Warfare, Iraq, Kuwait, Palestine Liberation Organization, Saudi Arabia*, etc.). *Computer* was substantially revised, and *Nuclear Energy* was rewritten. The articles on more than 50 U.S. and Canadian national parks were revised and updated. A change of government in Ethiopia, the end of the Angolan civil war, continuation of the U.S. banking crisis, the April cyclone in Bangladesh, Rajiv Ghandi's assassination in India in May, and civil war in Yugoslavia are all duly noted. Also included are the deaths of Miles Davis, Martha Graham, Graham Greene, Rudolf Serkin, Dr. Seuss, and I. B. Singer. Dates for population figures are given; those for the U.S. are from the 1990 census.

This revision continues the pattern of recent years of increasing the number of four-color illustrations by adding 45 new pictures. New color illustrations appear in such articles as *Canada, Kuwait*, and *Guided Missiles*; new black and white ones are included in *Chemical Reaction, Conservative Party (UK)*, and *France*. About three-fifths of the set's 9,000 illustrations are in black and white.

The text of *Funk & Wagnalls* provides the basis for *Encarta*, a new CD-ROM encyclopedia from Microsoft. All new illustrations have been added, however, along with audio and video.

*Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*, while not as detailed and scholarly as the major multivolume sets, provides clear, up-to-date, worldwide coverage in a readable style well suited for an audience from junior high school

upward. While designed primarily for home use, it may be a suitable purchase for libraries, for it gives good value for the price.

**The New Book of Knowledge.** 21 v. Lawrence T. Lorimer, editorial director; Gerry Gabianelli, editor in chief. Grolier, 1992.

*The New Book of Knowledge* has been an alphabetically arranged encyclopedia since 1966, when Grolier replaced the topically arranged *Book of Knowledge*. This past year, a major five-year revision of the set began. The most notable format change will be the eventual elimination of the "Dictionary Index", which is a separate index in each of the 20 volumes that also includes brief text entries. No new "Dictionary Index" entries were added this year, and existing entries are gradually being integrated into the main body of the text.

The 1,766 contributors to *NBK* are experts well positioned to be knowledgeable about the subjects they write about or review. Among the 66 contributors new to this edition are Alan Nourse, author of *Teen Guide to AIDS Protection (Birth Control)*, and Alan Palmer, author of *The Penguin Dictionary of Modern History 1789–1945 (Balfour, Arthur J.; Bruce, Robert; Chamberlain Family; Macmillan, Harold)*. A list of all contributors and their affiliations appears between the text and the "Dictionary Index" in volume 20.

*NBK* is written primarily for children "both in school and at home" through middle or junior high school. The Dale-Chall readability formula is used to make certain the comprehension level of articles matches the ages at which the topic would appeal to children or be introduced to them in school.

The encyclopedia is organized letter by letter. Many cross-references are included both within and at the ends of articles. About 700 *see* references, including 122 new ones,

are also included throughout the set. Unfortunately, some of these references are confusing. For instance, "Anteaters. See MAMMALS" appears on the page preceding the new three-page article *Anteaters*. A see reference for *Anthrax* appears out of alphabetical order before the article *Anthony, Susan B.*

Volume 21 is an index containing 85,000 entries. It cumulates all the references from the 20 volume indexes and also includes references to all "Dictionary Index" text entries (but doesn't duplicate those entries).

For the 1992 edition, five volumes of *NBK* were substantially revised (*A*, *B*, *C*, *G*, and *L*), compared with only four volumes during the previous three years combined. Seventy-five new articles were added for 1992, including *Amphibians*, *Arabs*, and *Bible, People in the*. Fifty of these new articles are biographies of such people as Susan B. Anthony, Judy Blume, John Major, and I. M. Pei. Many of these biographies and some of the new narrow topical entries like *Aquaculture*, *Asbestos*, and *Central Intelligence Agency* used to be in the "Dictionary Index". However, they have been greatly expanded since being moved to the main body of the text. Another 60 text articles were replaced, including *Books*, *Economics*, *Georgia*, *North Carolina*, and *North Dakota*. These three state articles bring the total to seven given in a new format with attractive graphic features. The *Economics* article exemplifies a new feature, namely, the inclusion of biographical profiles of people important to the context of the articles. In this case, five people are profiled: Adam Smith, John Meynard Keynes, Paul Samuelson, Milton Friedman, and John Kenneth Galbraith, several of whom used to be in the "Dictionary Index". Other major articles replaced include *American Literature*, *Banks and Banking*, *Germany*, and *Columbus, Christopher*.

Thirty articles were completely updated and substantively rewritten, including *Iraq*, *Kuwait*, *Robin Hood*, *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*, and *Yugoslavia*. Minor revisions

or updates were done for 295 articles, including *Cheerleading*, *Democracy*, *Imperialism*, and *Little League Baseball*. Even though *Baltimore* and *Maryland* were among the articles receiving minor revision, errors were noted. The *Baltimore* article states that "Sports fans cheer baseball's Orioles and football's Colts at Memorial Stadium." In fact, the Colts moved to Indianapolis in 1984, and the article *Indianapolis* correctly notes that they play in the Hoosier Dome there. This year, the Orioles started playing in Oriole Park at Camden Yards, their new stadium. In the article *Legislatures*, Bangladesh and Pakistan are noted to be under martial law since 1982 and 1976, respectively, when martial law was lifted in 1986 and 1985. Several entries still refer to West and East Germany. There is no biography of David Souter, who was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1990.

For this edition, 653 new photographs, 180 new works of art, and 27 new maps were added. Most of the new illustrations are in color, as are over 90 percent of the set's pictures. The new graphic features of the past few years and the heavy illustration make *NBK* a very attractive encyclopedia. The newly illustrated entries *Animals*, *Books*, *Games*, and *Columbus, Christopher* will appeal to children. There are still dated illustrations in such articles as *Paper and Reading*.

Special features of *NBK*, all indexed in the accompanying *Home and School Reading and Study Guides*, include articles on hobbies and leisure activities, literary excerpts, projects and experiments, "wonder questions," and articles of interest to parents. The wonder questions provide excellent explanations; two examples are "How do we get salt?" and "What happens at absolute zero?" This paperback volume also contains a bibliography for parents and teachers that relates *NBK* articles to the curriculum. Of the more than 5,000 books for young readers listed, over 900 titles are new this year.

*The New Book of Knowledge* will both satisfy curiosity and encourage further exploration in children. Parents, teachers, librarians, and school-age children up to and in some cases through high school will find it to be a valuable reference resource.

**The New Encyclopaedia Britannica.** 32 v. 15th ed.  
Robert McHenry, general editor. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1992.

*Britannica* was first published in Scotland, 1768–1771. Around 1900 two Americans acquired the rights to the encyclopedia. Currently, the encyclopedia is divided into three parts: a one-volume outline of knowledge, the *Propaedia*; a 12-volume ready-reference set, the *Micropaedia*; and the 17-volume *Macropaedia* with lengthy scholarly articles. There is a superb two-volume index and a yearbook, *Britannica Book of the Year/Britannica World Data* that includes world statistics that first-time purchasers receive free for that year.

This year's *Micropaedia* includes 64,404 articles averaging just under 300 words. These include 282 entirely new articles, 1,434 revised articles, and 1,850 that were updated to include 1990 U.S. census data. One hundred ninety new photographs were added along with 15 drawings and 63 maps. Approximately 40 percent of the new entries are biographies. Examples include James Baker III, Mañuel Noriega, Salman Rushdie, and David Souter. Other new entries describe companies such as Anheuser-Busch and Quaker Oats; places like Ashland, Kentucky; institutions such as the Public Broadcasting System; and such terms as *cha cha* and *sweetener*. Examples of updating are many, ranging from *Abortion*, which now includes discussion of the 1989 *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* to *Yeltsin, Boris*, covered through August 1991.

In recent years *Britannica* has made a more concerted effort to update articles rather than relying so heavily on

the yearbook. However, more still needs to be done in the *Micropaedia*. The article *Bahrain* was not revised to note that country's role in the Gulf War. In *Sporting Record*, which lists champions in various sports, the most recent entries are for 1987 for events held annually and 1985 for quadrennial events. Numerous bibliographies continue to be out-of-date. The bibliography for explorer LaSalle stops in 1964 despite many recent monographs while that for T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia fame) lists biographies from 1938 and 1977, ignoring several published in the 1980s.

While *Britannica* has made strides in recent years to increase the number of illustrations, especially in color, the *Micropaedia* is riddled with tiny black-and-white photographs.

The 1992 *Macropaedia* contains 674 signed articles averaging 25 pages in length. These range from three- to four-page articles on cities to 308 pages on the U.S. and 139 pages on the United Kingdom. Biographies make up 14 percent of the entries, cities 11 percent, countries 10 percent, national literatures 4 percent, and geographic regions 3 percent. Africa is slighted in terms of separate entries in the *Macropaedia*. While 26 European countries, 21 Asian countries, and 11 South American countries have entries, only 4 African countries are listed separately. The others are covered in lengthy regional articles. It is hard to see why *Luxembourg* merits independent coverage in the *Macropaedia* and *Nigeria* does not.

Since encyclopedias are usually static in size, with a new entry meaning the elimination of an old one, entries in the 1992 set were compared with the 1989 one. Since 1989, 29 entries have been added to the *Macropaedia* and 33 deleted. New entries include *Bhutan*, *Guyana*, *Madagascar*, and *The Netherlands*. Other notable new entries include those on the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans; *Baltic States*; and *Telescopes*. Among articles dropped are several surprising ones: *Education, Higher*; *Education,*

*Special; Education, Social and Economic Aspects of; and Psychology.*

One of the great strengths of the *Macropaedia* has always been its distinguished cast of contributors. The 115 new contributors include 35 Americans, 16 Australians, 11 from the U.K., and others from Canada, New Zealand, Chile, and France.

Some entries in need of updating in the *Macropaedia* include the following: *Alcohol and Drug Consumption*, which includes a world chart with statistics dating from 1971; *Birds*, with a bibliography citing sources principally from the 1950s and 1960s; and *Broadcasting*, which recommends *Techniques of Television Production* (2d ed., 1962) in its bibliography. Despite the rash of new monographs on exploration in recent years, the bibliography for *European Overseas Explorations and Empire* cites nothing since 1969 on exploration. The bibliography in the article on Columbus is short and dated (1967 or older).

On the plus side is the revised article *Australia*, with one black-and-white and 12 color maps, 20 illustrations, a superb commentary, and a lengthy bibliography. Also revised is *Australia and New Zealand, Literatures of*, which is six pages longer than the previous version. Other notable revisions include the articles *European History and Culture; Greek and Roman Civilization, Ancient; and Iraq*.

The index with 665,000 references is superb. In checking *Belize*, the index also lists the Spanish equivalent *Belice* and the former colonial name, British Honduras. It refers to an entry in the *Micropaedia*, one in the *Macropaeida*, notes a map in the *Macropaedia*, suggests recent statistical information can be found in the *World Data Annual*, notes its flag is illustrated on plate 2 of *Flag*, and suggests coverage of topics in many other volumes.

This fall Britannica is releasing the *Britannica Electronic Index* on CD-ROM to be used with an IBM PC or compatible

computer. This is more than an electronic version of the printed index to the set. Using the search software developed for *Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia*, it is possible to search by entry title ("Title Finder") or to do a keyword search ("Idea Search"). "People, Places, and Things" searches subsets of the database. Under "People," for instance, it is possible to get a list of all British writers or French composers discussed in the set. All lists of citations can be printed out. The disc also contains a version of *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. While the *Electronic Index* must be used with the print set, it does offer enhanced access to it. It is available for \$299 or for \$99 as a package with the 1992 *NEB*.

The *Propaedia*, designed as a kind of self-study guide, is scarcely used in libraries. As the twentieth anniversary of the fifteenth edition approaches, it may be an appropriate time to drop it. Time and money spent on updating the many outlines and lists could be more effectively used to update articles in the *Micropaedia* and revise bibliographies. The plates on the human body, missed by most patrons because of their location in the *Propaedia*, could be moved to the *Macropaedia*.

As *Britannica* enters its 225th year, it remains the largest and most scholarly encyclopedia in the English language. Studies have shown that it is the most cited encyclopedia in both academic and popular publications. This authoritative set is suitable for academic, public, and many high school libraries.

**New Standard Encyclopedia.** 20v. Douglas W. Downey, editor in chief. Standard Educational Corp., 1992.

A moderate-sized set first published in 1910, *New Standard Encyclopedia* is designed for the basic reference use of the general reader from middle school to adult. It is sold to

schools and libraries by the Marshall Cavendish sales force; it is sold to consumers by various wholesalers.

Following suggestions on how to use the set, there are listings of editorial board members, contributors, consultants, advisers, and authenticators. Most articles are drafted by editorial staff and are unsigned; authenticators review these entries for accuracy. There are no significant staff changes this year; however, 24 new authenticators were added, and 12 were dropped. Among the new ones are Peter M. Baker of the Laser Institute (*Laser*); Steve Peggs of Fermi National Laboratory (*Particle Accelerator*); and Gerald Strauch of the University of Chicago (*Surgery*).

Most articles are only a few paragraphs in length, though multipage coverage is given to such topics as *Dress*, *Motion Pictures*, and *United States*. Writing is concise; in general, vocabulary is accessible to upper elementary students. Pronunciation is provided for foreign and difficult words.

Of the 17,400 articles in the set, 121 are new to this printing; 96 of these are found in the volumes covering the letters *C* and *D*. Among the new articles are *Carpal Tunnel Syndrome*, *Croatia*, *Cult*, *Domestic Violence*, *Desktop Publishing*, and *Tropical Rain Forest*. All the new articles are less than a page in length, except for *Drug Abuse*, which has two pages of text and a table listing commonly abused drugs, and *Persian Gulf War*, which has four pages of text, several photographs, and a map. More than 50 of the new entries are biographies of such individuals as Jacques D'Amboise, Margaret Drabble, Joshua Gibson, John Major, and Boris Yeltsin. Thirty-six articles were rewritten (e.g., *Computer*, *Folklore*, *Protein*, *Zulus*, and *Degas*, *Edgar*). *Computer*, for instance, has 22 new color photographs, a glossary of terms, and a bibliography with some titles noted as being for younger readers. Extensive revision occurred in 25 major articles (e.g., *AIDS*, *Dinosaur*, *Germany*, *Radio*, *Surgery*). In addition to the above, over 1,000 articles were updated. New census data was added to all

U.S. state articles, and the indexes to state maps were updated to show new population figures. However, entries for some individual cities still list 1980 population. So, for instance, while a table in *Louisiana* lists the population of Lafayette as 94,440, the separate entry *Lafayette* gives it as 81,961.

Updating was generally achieved to date of publication. For example, the article *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* is prefaced with "As this article was being prepared for the printer, the political situation in the Soviet Union was in a state of flux and the country's future was uncertain. This article describes the Soviet Union as it existed in August, 1991." Also noted are the following: political and economic isolation of Cuba in early 1990s, fighting between Croatians and Serbs in 1991, the bankruptcy of many airlines, and the deaths of Dame Margot Fonteyn and Martha Graham. Not noted were such items as the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and rebel forces gaining power in Ethiopia. There is still a lack of adequate information on the homeless. *Homelessness* is listed in the index with reference to the article *Vagrancy*.

Two hundred one bibliographies were updated this year. For the most part, bibliographies have titles from the 1980s, with some 1990 ones. Usually a few titles are listed for younger readers. Volume 20, the index, contains 100,000 entries. In addition, the 19 text volumes contain over 13,600 *see* entries and 40,000 cross-references. This extensive cross-referencing system will be of help to students who are reluctant to use an index volume. There are special indexes within the set, for example, "Index to Star Maps," "Index to Breeds of Dogs," "Guide to Reproduction of Paintings."

Revisions were made on 101 maps. Some two-color maps were converted to four color. Examples are Canada, Germany, and Iran. The effort to update illustrations and to increase the use of four color is evidenced by the addition

of 524 new illustrations (450 of them in color) and the deletion of 469 old ones. Notable among the reillustrated articles are *Dance*, *Drama*, and *Computer*. About two-thirds of the set's illustrations are still black and white, and some drab photographs need to be replaced. Some country articles, for instance, lack color.

*New Standard Encyclopedia* continues to provide basic factual information on a great variety of topics. Within its size limitations, it is a useful reference tool for students and adults.

**The World Book Encyclopedia.** 22 v. William H. Nault, publisher; Robert O. Zeleny, editor in chief. World Book, 1992.

*The World Book Encyclopedia* was first published in 1917; this year marks its seventy-fifth anniversary. It continues to be an outstanding general encyclopedia with fine illustrations, excellent layout, and up-to-date coverage of a world that is changing rapidly.

*World Book*'s primary objective is to provide information about humanity, the world, and the universe for elementary and secondary school students. It also serves as a general reference source for adults and is popular as a ready-reference tool in libraries. It provides balanced coverage of world events, science, the arts, and other topics.

More than 3,000 experts contribute to the *World Book* as authors, illustrators, authenticators, reviewers, and consultants. Their names appear in the preface to the A volume. Among the new contributors this year are R. Michael Blaese of the National Cancer Institute (*Gene Therapy*) and David A. Deese of Boston College (*Persian Gulf War*). Volume 22 is the index and research guide. The 35-page section, "A Student Guide to Better Writing, Speaking, and Research Skills," at the beginning of this volume, has been extensively revised. It includes information about using online and

CD-ROM sources. Many of the 200 reading and study guides that appear in this volume have been updated, too. Most of the sources for scientific and technical articles are from the 1980s and 1990s. Lists for humanities and social science topics contain books with a wider range of publication dates, but most of them contain some titles from the 1980s.

Articles in *World Book* are written at the appropriate vocabulary level for the anticipated reader, so they vary in length and complexity. All technical terms are italicized and defined in the text. An elaborate cross-reference system within the text makes finding related material easy for young users who may not consult the index. More than 1,600 bibliographies, divided by reading level, accompany articles. Eight are new and 350 have been revised for this edition.

This edition of *World Book* contains approximately 17,500 articles. Fifty of these are completely new, 481 have been extensively revised, and more than 2,900 have been partially revised. The new entries include 19 biographies (e.g., of Jim Henson, H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Clarence Thomas, Chris Van Allsburg, Alice Walker). Most of the new topical entries are brief (*Emergency Medical Services*, *Green Party*, and *Zebra Mussel*). However, the new entry *Plate Tectonics* is almost four pages in length and is illustrated with several drawings. *Reproduction, Human*, another new entry, is six pages and illustrated with drawings showing the development of the embryo and the birth of a baby. *Nutrition* is an example of a major revision. It includes all new illustrations, a new bibliography, and revised food groups and charts of recommended dietary allowances. *Earthquake*, *Evolution*, and *Iraq* are other examples of articles that were extensively revised and reillustrated.

General updating in this set reflects the turbulent world events of the past year. The first printing shows events as of December 1991. The second printing, available in April, contains additional revisions through January 1992. The

article on the Soviet Union includes information about the coup and the formation of a transitional government. The second printing covers the demise of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev's resignation, and the independent status of the former republics. The article *Yugoslavia* mentions the ethnic tensions and fighting that continue to plague that country. The ethnic republic boundaries appear on the maps. The end of the Angolan civil war, the beginning of the new Ethiopian government, the disbanding of the Warsaw Pact, as well as the repeal of South Africa's apartheid laws and the lifting of the U.S. sanctions are covered.

Two special features appear in the 1992 *World Book*. One is a section at the beginning of the A volume commemorating the encyclopedia's seventy-fifth anniversary with reprints of old articles to show how much things have changed over the years. For example, a 1917 article about flying machines is reproduced. Articles about Africa show its transition from a continent of colonies to one of independent states. The other special feature is an eight-page foldout section, "The Legacy of Columbus," in the article *Columbus*. It includes maps of the expeditions and information about the changing view of the world as a result of exploration. The biography of Columbus covers both his accomplishments and the current controversies about his impact on the Americas.

*World Book* is known for its statistical currency. All statistics are reviewed and revised on a regular basis. Sources and dates are provided. Population data for countries of the world include the most recent census figures and, for most countries, a current estimate and a five-year projection. Commodity statistics and economic indicators such as those in articles *Petroleum*, *Cost of Living*, and *Food Supply* are the latest available.

Outstanding graphics are another *World Book* strength. There are about 29,000 illustrations in the encyclopedia, 80 percent of them in color. Maps, charts, graphs, and time

lines help explain material in articles. About 700 new illustrations have been added this year. Sixty-two maps were added or revised to reflect changes in the Soviet Union and Europe. There are new maps in the articles *Persian Gulf War*, *Earthquake*, *Estonia*, *Greece*, *Iraq*, *Latvia*, and *Lithuania*.

The *Information Finder* makes the full text of *The World Book Encyclopedia* and *The World Book Dictionary* available on CD-ROM.

The seventy-fifth anniversary edition of *World Book*, like its predecessors, is an excellent reference source for schools and libraries. It maintains the high standards for currency, accuracy, accessibility, and readability established by the publisher.

**ENCYCLOPEDIA SUMMARY CHART 1992**

Encyclopedia	Approximate Entries—Excluding Cross-References	Pages	Approximate Illustrations	Consumer Price 1992*	School & Library Price 1992*
Academic American Encyclopedia (21v.)	28,940	9,832	16,930	\$775	\$599
Collier's Encyclopedia (24v.)	25,000	19,786	14,380	\$1,499.50 \$1,949.50 w/ Home Educational Program	\$979
Compton's Encyclopedia and Fact-Index (26v.)	5,234—main text 28,746—Fact-Index	10,591	22,510	\$599	\$569
Encyclopedia Americana (30v.)	52,000	26,740	22,865	\$1,400	\$919
Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia (29v.)	25,000	13,024	9,458	\$162.81	NA+
The New Book of Knowledge (21v.)	8,972	10,572	23,600	\$750	\$559
The New Encyclopaedia Britannica (32v.)	65,078	32,030	23,617	\$1,599	\$1,199
New Standard Encyclopedia (20v.)	17,437	11,304	12,000	Determined by independent distributors	\$549.95
The World Book Encyclopedia (22v.)	17,500	14,060	29,000	\$599-899 depending on choice of binding	\$520

\* Prices exclude shipping & handling costs

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